

REMARKS

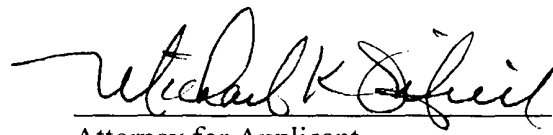
This Preliminary Amendment is being filed concurrently with a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in response to the Office Action dated September 5, 2003. Claims 15, 16 and 20 to 27 are currently in the application, of which Claims 15, 16 and 20 are the independent claims. Claims 1 to 14 and 17 to 19 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Entry of the foregoing amendment and passage to allowance are respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 15, 16 and 20. In keeping with this indication, Claim 15 has been amended into independent form and to use language more clearly aligned with the Examiner's stated reasons for allowance. Newly added Claims 21 to 27 each depend from a claim that has been indicated as allowable. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to
our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael K. Deifel", written over a horizontal line.

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